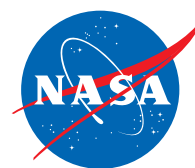


# Headquarters Equal Opportunity REPORTER



A Quarterly Newsletter from NASA HQ Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management

Winter • 2003 Volume

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HEADQUARTERS EO OFFICE



By Pamela G. Covington

It is a new year, and with it comes opportunities to do even bigger and better things. The staff of the HQ EO Office is up to the challenges that the year will bring, and we are setting strategic goals to keep the EO Program evolving. I believe equal opportunity is

core to successful human capital management and overall mission success. Therefore, my primary goal for the HQ EO Office is to be an enabler and a resource for those who directly impact the successful accomplishment of EO and diversity goals and objectives.

For the upcoming year, I am looking forward to revitalizing a forum for more direct employee involvement in the activities of my office and creating and promoting opportunities for management champions. I am interested in your thoughts and ideas on how we can work together to develop a model program. E-mail me at [pcovingt@hq.nasa.gov](mailto:pcovingt@hq.nasa.gov) or come by the EO Office located at 4F35.

Enjoy the newsletter!

### Native American Month—HQ Native American Program Manager Participates in Symposium Commemorating Astronaut John B. Herrington's First Launch

On November 8–11, 2002, a Symposium on Linking Education to Employment was held in commemoration of

the flight of the first Tribally Enrolled Native American Astronaut, John B. Herrington (Chickasaw). The activity was sponsored by Code E at the Kennedy Space Center.



NASA Native American and Tribal Colleges Program Managers, as well as Advisory Committee members, attended their annual meeting as part of the symposium. There were over 45 tribes represented among the 400 guests, including 200 Tribal Elders and members of the Chickasaw Nation.



HQ Native American Advisory Chair, Garnett McKenzie and former HQ Native American Program Manager, Pat Oliver, assisted in planning the events that included three Chickasaw princesses.



The symposium was packed with information, spirituality, and celebration for educators such as Ron McNeil and one of the symposium chairs and NASA's Tribal Colleges Program Manager, MaryAnne Stoutsenberger. Ron is the great, great, great grandson of Chief Sitting Bull and President of Sitting Bull College, as well as the newly appointed chairperson of the President's Advisory Board on Tribal Colleges and Universities.



## WHAT'S NEW IN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES IMPACTING EO**

#### • **BILINGUAL ATMS**

Reaffirming its commitment to the visually impaired community through accessible banking, Bank of America (NYSE: BAC) has installed more than 300 bilingual Talking ATMs in Florida. This effort has been established as part of the company's previously announced plan to install more than 7,000 Talking ATMs coast-to-coast by the end of 2005. The rollout of these bilingual ATMs makes it easier for customers who are blind or visually impaired to perform financial transactions. The bilingual ATMs expand the banking capabilities of Spanish-speaking customers.

Talking ATMs deliver private, spoken instructions through a headset plugged into an audio jack. In addition to providing customers with the transaction capabilities they are familiar with, the Talking ATMs will also deliver every function available as those of the nontalking ATMs. For more information, see <http://www.bankofamerica.com>

#### • **THE FORUM FOR ONLINE MEDIATION**

Mediation is a fair and efficient process to help an

individual resolve employment disputes and reach an agreement. A neutral mediator assists in reaching a voluntary, negotiated agreement. Choosing mediation to resolve employment discrimination disputes promotes a better work environment, reduces costs, and works for the employer and the employee.

Internet Neutral is a quick and inexpensive way to resolve disputes between Internet businesses and their customers or suppliers, wherever they may be in the world, through the use of Internet or online mediation. Online mediation is convenient for each of the parties (complainant, responsible management official, and the mediator) because there is no travel involved, and each of the parties can feel comfortable in their own work area.

Internet Neutral mediates on the Internet, unless the other parties agree to a face-to-face meeting or teleconference. Two methods of Internet Neutral are through mediation sessions and videoconferencing. Mediation sessions take place on the Internet via e-mail, instant messaging, chat conference rooms, and/or videoconferencing, all of which are set up by Internet Neutral as private and confidential mediation channels. Videoconferencing capabilities are now more common, and Internet Neutral is adopting videoconferencing as the preferred mediation forum. There are two conference channels or rooms involved in videoconferencing. One for private conversations between the complainant and the Mediator, and another room for private conversations with both of the parties and the Mediator. Internet Neutral will set up the conference channels in advance. The process is simple; the parties enter their designated conference channels at the appropriate time with an authorized password. For more information, see <http://www.internetneutral.com>

#### • **NASA/DOD CAP PARTNERSHIP**

NASA signed a partnership agreement with DoD/Computer/Electronic Accommodating Program to provide assistive technology for NASA employees with disabilities. The partnership was announced at a program held on January 15 in the HQ auditorium. The program was hosted by the Office of Equal

Opportunity Programs (Code E) and DoD, and featured distinguished speakers who shared their perspective on the importance of assistive technology for NASA and other Federal agencies in meeting their mission while creating an environment inclusive of people with disabilities. Demonstration booths were available for employees to experience an array of technology available through the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP), as well as an opportunity to view NASA technologies.

- **EEOC UPDATES GUIDANCE ON NATIONAL ORIGIN BIAS**

Cari M. Dominguez, chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), announced the issuance of the updated guidance in the form of a new Compliance Manual section on the prohibition against national origin discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The guidance, along with a new Web page and Q&A fact sheet, is part of the EEOC's proactive efforts to prevent workplace discrimination through education, outreach, and technical assistance to the employer and labor communities.

The new guidance explains the prohibition against national origin bias and emphasizes "best practices" aimed at fostering work environments that are free of such discrimination. It addresses a wide range of issues that arise in claims of national origin discrimination, including hiring decisions, harassment, and language issues.

The EEOC has posted a Web page containing the new Compliance Manual and Q&A fact sheet, as well as basic information about national origin discrimination. See [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

- **SELECTED PROFILES OF EXCELLENCE BROCHURE**

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (Code E) recently released their latest publication, *Selected Profiles of Excellence for the 21st Century*. The brochure highlights selected employees who represent the best of the Agency across all occupations,

including scientists and engineers, technical, clerical, and professional administrative staff. Limited copies of the publication are available through the HQ EO Office.

## **SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAMS**

- **Women's Equality Day**

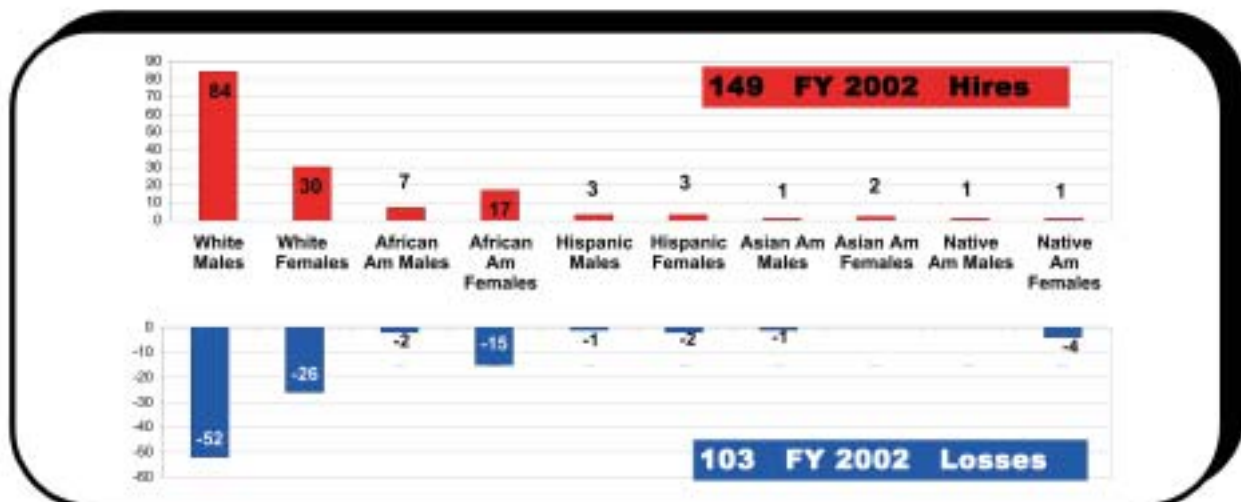
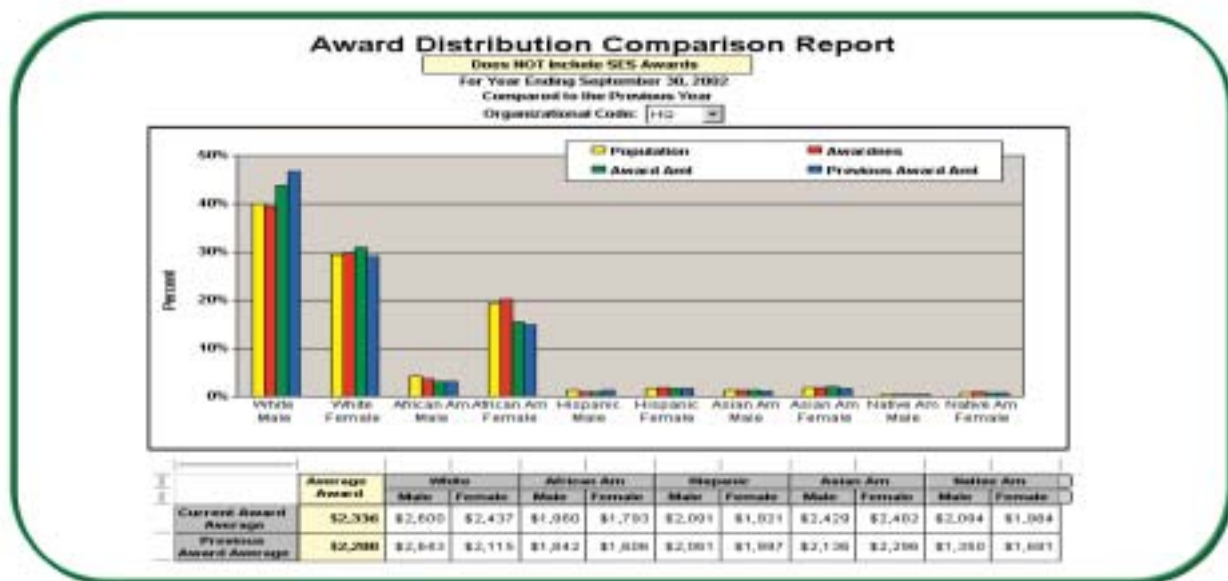
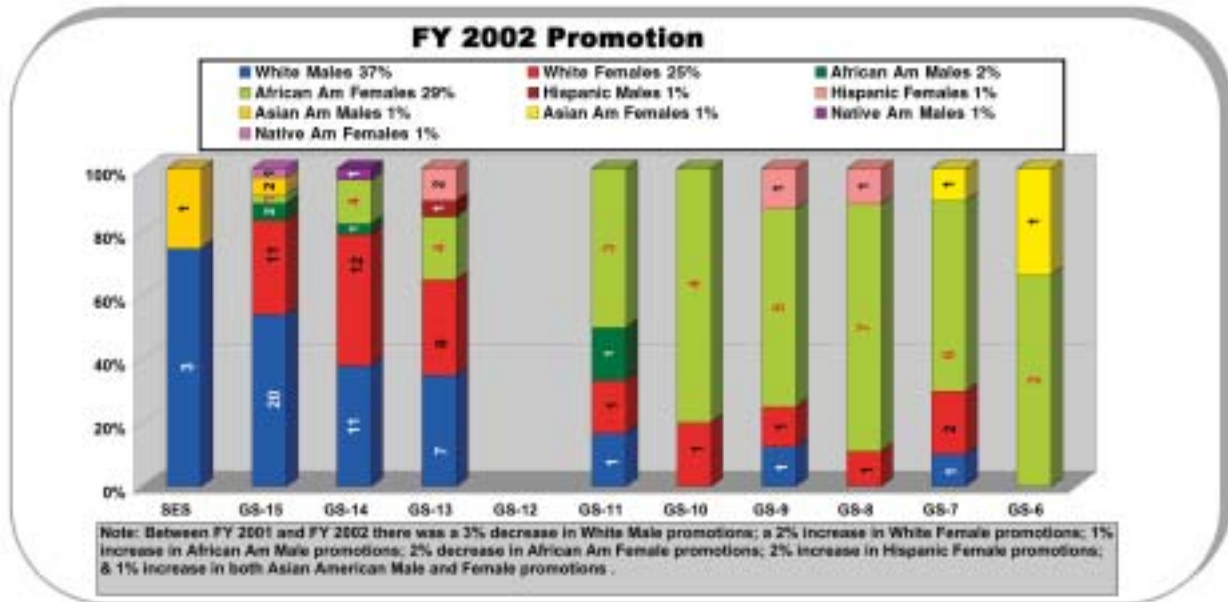
On August 26, 2002, Women's Equality Day was celebrated with an exhibit honoring women in the military, and especially our female astronauts. A workshop entitled Change was also a part of the celebration.

- **Hispanic Heritage Month**

This year for the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, NASA Headquarters was fortunate to have featured guest speaker Mr. Jamie Escalante (otherwise known as "El Maestro"—The Teacher). Mr. Escalante presented a math lesson to a group of approximately 120 eighth and ninth graders from the Cesar Chavez High School and the DC Latino Youth Center. The purpose of the presentation was to encourage the students to pursue careers in science and mathematics. Mr. Escalante impressed the students with different techniques to make mathematics fun and easy to manipulate.



# HEADQUARTERS FY 2002 AFFIRMATIVE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FACTORS





## CAREER MANAGEMENT

### Professional Administrative Intern Program (PAIP)

The Professional Administrative Intern Program (PAIP) is designed to develop new professional administrative employees so that they are able to perform independent, professional work as quickly as possible. This is achieved by providing structured activities, experiences, mentoring, and training that are designed to accelerate the intern's adjustment to the new position. The program has two levels (Level I and Level II) to provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform duties of the initial and subsequent, higher-graded positions. For example, a person in a GS-318 or GS-303 series who applies and qualifies for a position within a professional series such as GS-301, GS-343, or GS-201 would enter into the program upon selection. The PAIP positions are announced and competed just like any other professional administrative job within the Merit Promotion System at grades GS-07 through GS-12.

For further information on the program and to receive a handbook, call Ms. Sharon Boykins, PAIP Coordinator at (301) 286-7508.



**Ms. Sherry McAllister, Career Management Specialist, PAIP Level II**

Ms. Sherry McAllister is a PAIP participant who has successfully completed Level I of the program. She describes her experience in the program as "a most interesting first year because of the mentoring experience, the opportunities to share knowledge, the formal and informal training, the expansion of my network, and the collaboration I have experienced." She said her technical competences continue to grow, as well as her confidence, and she has refined her skills and behaviors necessary to accomplish more progressive responsibilities. She is a true advocate for the PAIP program.

## CASE HIGHLIGHTS FROM EEOC DECISION

The following is a synopsis of an actual case and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) decision taken from EEOC's Federal Sector Administrative Decision database. The objective is to provide insight on appeal cases and EEOC's rationale for their decisions. For the entire case, refer to EEOC's Web site at <http://www.EEOC.gov>

### AGE DISCRIMINATION SUIT—Jury Verdict Results in \$430,427 Award for Fired Older Workers.

Age discrimination is still a persistent problem in today's workplace. In fiscal year 2000, EEOC received 16,008 Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) charge filings nationwide and obtained approximately \$56 million in monetary benefits for victims of age discrimination through enforcement and litigation.

A lawsuit against the University of Wisconsin (UW) Press, a book publishing division of the Graduate School of UW-Madison, was filed under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. In the suit, EEOC charged, and the jury found, that Rosalie Robertson, then 50; Chuck Evenson, then 54; Mary Braun, then 46; and Joan Strasbaugh, then 47, the four

oldest employees of UW Press, were terminated from their employment because of their respective ages and replaced with younger workers in violation of the ADEA. The jury made an initial finding against UW Press on the issue of liability on May 8, 2001, when it returned a verdict of intentional age discrimination in regards to all four terminations.

During the trial, UW Press claimed that despite their seniority, the four individuals were laid off for cost reasons and because of a lack of skills in computer technology as part of a reduction in force (RIF). However, EEOC argued that younger employees were hired into the same positions shortly after the alleged RIF, and that the four terminated workers were in fact ready, willing, and able to learn any required new skills to perform their jobs.

As a result of the verdict, the four former UW Press employees shared \$430,427 comprised of back pay, front pay, and liquidated damages.

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## BECAUSE YOU ASKED

### **“Can We Talk?” Data Analysis Briefing**

The HQ EO Office hosted the quarterly “Can We Talk” employee dialogue session. The session focused on workforce statistical demographics and analysis. A detailed briefing and discussion was held with the participants that included topics on the following:

- Affirmative Employment Program,
- PATCO (Professional, Administrative, Technical, Clerical, Others),
- Civil Labor Force (CLF relevant),
- Ethnic Population,
- Grade Distribution,
- Parity Analysis with CL, and
- Losses/Hires.

Some of the data charts used for this briefing are included in the Newsletter under the heading FY-02 Affirmative Employment Program Factors.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH OBSERVANCE PROGRAM**

*March 19, 2003*

Speaker: Dr. Dorothy Heights, President, National Council of Negro Women

Mark your calendar

### **WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH EXHIBIT**

*March 2003*

### **WOMEN IN AVIATION CONFERENCE**

*March 20–22, 2003*

Cincinnati, OH

### **NATIONAL SOCIETY OF BLACK ENGINEERS CONFERENCE (NSBE)**

*March 19–23, 2003*

Anaheim, CA

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION (NAFEO)**

*April 8–13, 2003*

Washington, DC

### **TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY**

*April 24, 2003*

### **HOLOCAUST OBSERVANCE EXHIBIT**

*April 2003*

### **ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER OBSERVANCE EXHIBIT**

*May 2003*

### **FEDERAL ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN COUNCIL CONFERENCE**

*May 2003*

For additional information, see the Code CE Web site:

<http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codece/codece>

## WHAT'S BEING CELEBRATED AROUND THE WORLD

### **St. Joseph's Day, March 19**

An international festival honoring St. Joseph in which special foods are prepared, and some people reenact Mary and Joseph's search for shelter when Mary was about to give birth to the baby Jesus. It is a weeklong festival in Valencia, Spain called Fallas e san Jos.

### **Independence Day, Bangladesh, March 26**

Commemorates independence from Pakistan (then known as West Pakistan) in 1971 and the start of the Liberation War.

### **Pan-American Day, April 14**

A celebration in the 21 North, Central, and South American countries making up the Organization of American States.

### **Freedom Day, April 27**

Commemorates this date, in 1994, when all people were allowed to vote, regardless of race or heritage.

### **May Day, May 1**

Originally connected to fertility and growth but now honors working people. Also called International Workers' Day.

### **African Liberation Day, May 25**

Focuses on the progress of liberation for all African nations. The day is marked by rallies and parades throughout Africa, as well as in parts of Russia, Canada, Brazil, and the U.S.

### **Independence Day, June 1**

Marks Samoa's independence from New Zealand on January 1, 1962, and status as the first independent Polynesian state. Celebrated in June because of the rainy season in January.

## EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBILITIES IN FURTHERING THE HQ EO AND DIVERSITY PROGRAM

- Raise issues and concerns at the earliest opportunity and actively participate in resolution.
- Be knowledgeable of HQ EO and diversity goals, objectives, policies, and procedures governing the program.
- Communicate career goals and participate with supervisor in constructing IDPs for developmental opportunities and career advancement.
- Actively seek developmental opportunities to maintain and enhance knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Participate in educational and community outreach and recruitment activities.
- Participate in and attend special emphasis observances and other cultural-enriching activities.

## THE SIX BEE ADJECTIVES OF EEO



## QUOTE FOR THE QUARTER

*By Dr. David M. Burns*

Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life.

Assert your right to make a few mistakes. If people can't accept your imperfections, that's their fault.

Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism. Confronting your fears and allowing yourself the right to be human can, paradoxically, make you a far happier and more productive person.

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## EO INFORMATION STATION

Visit the EO Information Station located outside the EO Office in Room 4F35. We have all the latest EEOC fact sheets on the Federal complaint process.

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## CONGRATULATIONS

Ms. Vickie Thorne, Director, Career Management Division, for being selected for the 2002 NASA Headquarters Equal Opportunity Medal.

Ms. Patricia Oliver, who retired on January 3, 2003, from the Headquarters Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management Office. Ms. Oliver had over 30 years of service.

If you know of an employee you would like to congratulate on his/her contributions to the HQ EO Program and NASA in general, please e-mail the information to [lmcduffi@hq.nasa.gov](mailto:lmcduffi@hq.nasa.gov), and they will be featured in the *REPORTER*.

## KEY EO WEB SITES



Code CE—<http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codeec/codece>  
Code E—<http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codee>  
EEOC—<http://www.eeoc.gov>  
OPM—<http://www.opm.gov>

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## TELL US



We welcome any of your comments and suggestions regarding the Equal Opportunity *REPORTER*. Send comments to [lmcduffi@hq.nasa.gov](mailto:lmcduffi@hq.nasa.gov)

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## 2003 PROFESSIONAL SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM— CALL FOR SPONSORSHIP

It is that time of year to plan for the 2003 Professional Summer Internship Program. The HQ EO Office (Code CE) is preparing to host a number of professional students pursuing business degrees for a 10-week work assignment beginning in June 2003.

The Professional Summer Internship Program is designed to provide quality work experiences for undergraduate and graduate students by pairing them with senior NASA employees in the development of NASA's mission. The HQ EO Office is requesting that each Code's EO point of contact (POC) identify the number of Summer Interns that their Code will support this coming year and contact Dollie McCown at 358-0936 to request students. Logistical support for summer interns such as space and equipment are the responsibility of the sponsoring office. Resumes for summer interns will be available for review on or about April 7, 2003.